

## What Makes the National Career Readiness Certificate So Valuable?

### Meaningful to employers and educators

WorkKeys assessments can be used by any entity concerned about the employability skills of current and future employees. Test results provide valuable information for individuals, employers, high schools, colleges, one-stop centers, job services, welfare-to-work programs, correctional institutions, and occupational training programs.

### Based on skills needed for most jobs

WorkKeys Occupational Profiles are based on an analysis of more than 15,000 jobs across the economy, created with input from employees who actually perform the job tasks. WorkKeys profiles clearly indicate the skill levels needed to be successful in those jobs.

### Meaningful to individuals

Assessment results are easy for individuals to understand, helping them determine their current skill levels and how those skill levels match to occupations. Unlike other assessments, WorkKeys helps individuals compare their results to job and occupational requirements—not to other individuals.

### Tied to skill improvement programs

WorkKeys is tied to specific training and curriculum for skill improvement, enabling individuals to improve their skills and enhance job opportunities.

### Nationally portable

Registration transforms a certificate into a portable credential that can be used across the nation. Each certificate carries a unique registration number that identifies it within the national system. Registration enables individuals to share their certificates and include them with their credentials when they apply for jobs. Employers can verify an applicant's certificate status through a dedicated Internet portal or by using individualized URLs linked to each certificate number.

### Developed by ACT

ACT is an internationally recognized assessment and research company best known for the ACT® test, which helps students transition to college. ACT is equally committed to helping individuals transition to and succeed within the workplace using WorkKeys.

## Benefits of the National Career Readiness Certificate

- Enables educators, economic developers, and employers to work collaboratively toward the common goal of a well-trained workforce
- Documents that the workforce is ready for jobs that are available
- Serves as a proven economic development tool
- Explains to job seekers and applicants the skills they are going to need for jobs
- Increases the tax base by keeping successful employers in the state
- Helps educators adequately prepare students for careers and the workplace
- Increases communication between educators, training organizations, economic and workforce developers, and employers

To learn more about how your state, region, or business can affiliate with the National Career Readiness Certificate, call 1-800/WORKKEY (967-5539).

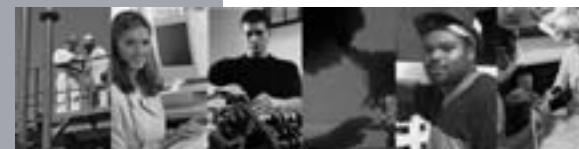
[www.NationalCareerReadiness.org](http://www.NationalCareerReadiness.org)



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ACT®

## A New Credential for Today's Workforce

Workers require strong, transferable skills in today's rapidly changing, technology-based economy. Workers who can't demonstrate those skills create a significant drag on productivity, revenue, and competitiveness in businesses across the nation.

To meet these challenges:

- **Employers** need reliable methods of identifying and measuring essential skills to hire qualified people and equip employees for the future.
- **Job seekers** need a credential that provides a clear picture of their career readiness skills.
- **Educators and trainers** need clearly defined specifications for the skills employers require.

Businesses, individuals, schools, and agencies have relied on ACT and the WorkKeys® system—today's premier work readiness solution—for more than 15 years to help solve these problems. Now ACT offers a new tool that builds on the power of WorkKeys and on its common language for the workforce.



## Introducing the National Career Readiness Certificate

This national credential is the centerpiece of a comprehensive system that helps individuals gain the skills businesses need to build tomorrow's workforce. It verifies core employability skills that are valuable across all businesses and industries. The credential offers individuals, employers, and educators a standardized approach to recognizing the universal value of these skills to job success.

## Three Essential Skills

The National Career Readiness Certificate requires qualifying scores on three WorkKeys assessments that provide a measure of “real world” workplace abilities. ACT has studied thousands of jobs and determined that these WorkKeys skills are universally essential to workplace success:

- **Reading for Information**—Necessary to read and use written text, including memos, letters, directions, and signs, in order to do a job
- **Applied Mathematics**—Necessary to apply mathematical reasoning, critical thinking, and problem-solving techniques in work settings
- **Locating information**—Necessary to locate, summarize, and use workplace information, including charts, forms, diagrams, maps, and gauges

## Three Certificate Levels

The National Career Readiness Certificate and credentialing programs that adopt its framework recognize individual skills at three levels and award a different certificate for each of them:

- **Gold** certificates are awarded to people who score level 5 or above on the three NCRC assessments. People who hold Gold certificates possess foundational skill levels needed for **90 percent** of the occupations analyzed by ACT.
- **Silver** is achieved by scoring a level 4 or above on the three assessments. Individuals at this level qualify for **65 percent** of the occupations analyzed by ACT.
- **Bronze** certificates are awarded to individuals who achieve scores of 3 or above. ACT research positions this level as the threshold of workplace competence. People who receive Bronze certificates are qualified for **35 percent** of the jobs studied by ACT.

## What is the WorkKeys System?

WorkKeys measures skills that are **essential** in virtually all jobs and occupations. It acts as a common language that supports assessment, research, and skill development. The system has three components.

**WorkKeys®**

### Research

ACT designed the system to identify and assess skills based on analysis techniques that directly relate skills to job tasks. The system's research component enables it to address content validity, construct validity, and criterion-related validity issues that support legally defensible selection instruments. It also serves as the basis for the ACT Occupational Profiles, a database of more than 15,000 job analysis studies conducted since the system launched.

### Assessment

The WorkKeys assessment component focuses on **Foundational Skills** in eight skill areas:

- Reading for Information
- Listening
- Applied Mathematics
- Observation
- Locating Information
- Teamwork
- Applied Technology
- Writing

Three other WorkKeys instruments assess **Personal Skills**:

- **Performance**—Measures attitudes toward work and tendency toward unsafe work behaviors
- **Talent**—Measures characteristics such as cooperation, discipline, influence, and stability
- **Fit**—Measures interests and values that determine the fit between a candidate and occupations in an organization

### Skill Development

The system also offers *WorkKeys Targets for Instruction*, which provide formal learning objectives to help individuals improve their foundational skills, and off-the-shelf training content tailored to each WorkKeys skill level.